

Requirements for Researchers

All descriptions and requirements are subject to change
Updated December 22, 2011

The City Archaeology Program has existed for approximately 30 years and is one of the largest and most important programs of its kind. Boston is the “City of Archaeology” with over 7,000 years of human history. The archaeological collections housed by the City are some of the most diverse and significant in the country and are irreplaceable parts of its history. As a public institution and research facility, I welcome everyone to participate in Boston’s archaeological past, however to ensure the protection and preservation of these collections, minimum requirements have been instituted and are outlined below. The City Archaeology Laboratory is a professional and scientific facility; however, it is also a place of discovery and hands-on learning. After reading the relevant requirements below, please contact me with any questions at joseph.bagley@cityofboston.gov. Email submission of letters and proposals is preferred, though paper copies can be mailed to the address below. Access to collections is at the discretion of the City Archaeologist and may be terminated at any time.

Sincerely,

Joe Bagley
City Archaeologist
Boston Landmarks Commission
Environment Department
City Hall, Room 805
Boston, MA 02201

Researchers

Researchers are qualified students and professionals who wish to use the resources at the City Archaeology Lab for the purpose of a honor’s thesis, BA or Master’s thesis, PhD Dissertation, research project, Cultural Resource Management project, or publication. Please see the list of possible research projects for a list of projects deemed high priority by the City Archaeologist. Research projects do not need to originate from this list. Informal meetings with the City Archaeologist are encouraged prior to formalizing any research arrangement to discuss possible issues that may arise and to view collections first-hand prior to forming a research proposal. Contact the City Archaeologist to make such arrangements.

Researchers will be allowed dedicated work space on a first come first serve basis if needed (three stations available). Long-term projects requiring regular access to collections will require an agreement with the City Archaeologist regarding access to the Lab. It is preferred and highly recommended that City collections remain within the City Archaeology Laboratory, however researchers are allowed to transfer collections out of the City Lab. **Without exception, no artifact, collection, or collection component can be removed from the City Lab without a signed permit from the State Archaeologist.**

Researchers are expected to conduct their analysis and processing in a professional manner, using City Lab standards of cataloging or bagging procedures, and in a reasonable timeframe. If a researcher fails to complete a project in a timely manner (expected time of use included in

proposal below) their collections become available to another researcher. There must be a final written component to any research project summarizing the results of the project, and a copy of these finished products (thesis, dissertation, publications, etc.) must be sent to the City Archaeologist to be stored with the collections. Access to collections is at the discretion of the City Archaeologist and may be terminated at any time.

Student Researcher Requirements:

- Students must be enrolled in a relevant program (Archaeology, Anthropology, History) and must have some archaeological education (coursework or field school). If you do not have any archaeological experience, it is recommended that you consider volunteering or an internship to gain experience.
- Submission of an unofficial transcript is recommended, but not required for research.
- It is expected that the City Archaeologist will be contacted and research arrangements be made prior to the commencement of a research project or submission of a research proposal. In other words contacting the City Archaeologist should be one of the very first steps in a research project.
- A current CV and list of references must be submitted to the City Archaeologist
- After meeting with the City Archaeologist to discuss your project, you will need to submit a written proposal of the project scope that outlines or answers the following concerns:
 - What school, institution, or business are you associated with?
 - What purpose is the access needed (thesis, dissertation, publication, research, etc.)?
 - What is your archaeological laboratory experience?
 - What collection(s) do you need access to?
 - What do you wish to study about these collections, and why?
 - Will you be looking at an entire collection or specific components of a collection(s)?
 - What archival or stabilization needs does the collection have?
 - What is your proposed timeline for the use of Lab resources?
 - Will you need long-term work space?
 - Will you require a collection or portion of a collection to be moved out of the City Lab?
 - Will there be any destructive analysis of artifacts?
 - This information will be kept on file. The city archaeologist may request further information or clarification regarding the research design.
- You must also include with your proposal a written letter of recommendation by your teacher, advisor, or thesis advisor. This letter should address the recommender's confidence that the researcher will complete the proposed project in a timely manner.
- If your collection is in need of re-bagging, cleaning, or cataloging, you will be required to complete these tasks first before analysis can continue. Details of this requirement will be arranged with the City Archaeologist. Please budget for this often time-consuming process in your proposal.
- Researchers are expected to create a schedule of when they will need access to the lab. You must notify the City Archaeologist if you will not be able to make a research appointment.
- Researchers are expected to come to the lab with the necessary skills to conduct their analysis with minimal or no supervision by the City Archaeologist. The City

Archaeologist, however, will always be available to discuss issues that arise during analysis.

- All conservation issues, missing artifacts, and delays of study must be brought to the attention of the City Archaeologist immediately.

Professional Researcher Requirements:

- Professionals are archaeologists with the background and experience necessary to conduct research and analysis on collections unsupervised. Professionals without this experience (writers, politicians, artists, etc.) will be expected to work directly with the City Archaeologist to better understand the collections they are viewing.
- Professional Researchers must be associated with a University, Cultural Resource Management firm, or other relevant institution or project (City Archaeologists' discretion). Members of the general public are not allowed unsupervised access to the collections.
- It is expected that the City Archaeologist will be contacted and research arrangements be made prior to the commencement of a research project or submission of a research proposal. In other words contacting the City Archaeologist should be one of the very first steps in a research project.
- A current CV and list of references must be submitted to the City Archaeologist
- Please submit a research proposal outlining the following:
 - What institution or business are you associated with?
 - What purpose is the access needed?
 - What collection(s) do you need access to?
 - What do you wish to study about these collections, and why?
 - Will you be looking at an entire collection or specific components of a collection?
 - What is your proposed timeline for the use of Lab resources?
 - Will you need long-term work space?
 - Will you require a collection or portion of a collection to be moved out of the City Lab?
 - Will there be any destructive analysis of artifacts?
 - This information will be kept on file. The city archaeologist may request further information or clarification regarding the research design.
- Depending on the scope and scale of the project, it may be required that professional researchers perform cleaning, rebagging, or cataloging duties on the collections prior to use.